



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*Ready for School. Set for Life.*

December 5, 2012  
First Things First  
4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Early Learning Advisory Committee

### DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

#### Committee Members in Attendance

Michael Kelley, Co-Chair; Lyra Contreras, Peggy Federici, Cheryl Foster, Dennis Ichikawa, Susan Jacobs, Bruce Liggett, Laura Martin, Barb Mezzio, Karen Ortiz, Dee Tamminen, Kymberlii Tenario and Karen Woodford.

#### Committee Members Attending Telephonically

Terry Doolan, Diane Fellows, Mary Lamm, Sibieanne Martinez, and Marjorie Rasper

#### Committee Members Absent

Karen Applequist, Mary Kramer-Reinwasser, Barb Milner, Dana Naimark, Jacquelyn Power, Jakob Raskob, Juan Sanchez, Jeff Smith, Alan Taylor and Daniel Zapata

#### Members of the Public Attending

Alishia Jeremiah, Dawn Craft and Erika Bowman

#### Staff Members in Attendance

Karen Woodhouse, Amy Kemp, Ida Rose Florez, Cami Ehler, Stephanie Golden, Sandy Foreman, Ginger Sandweg and Elsa Romero

#### Call to Order/Welcome and Introduction

The regular meeting of the First Things First – Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board, Early Learning Advisory Committee was held on December 5, 2012 at the First Things First Board Room, 4000 North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, Arizona 85012. The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Dr. Michael Kelley at approximately 1:00 p.m. A brief welcome was made by Co-Chair Kelley; everyone in attendance introduced themselves and the organization which they represent.

Co-Chair Kelley acknowledged and thanked members of the committee that were no longer able to continue serving on the committee. He then welcomed and introduced the new members of the committee.

**Comment [CE1]:** Do we need to list old/new members?

#### Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Member Ortiz. Motion seconded by Member Jacobs. Motion carried.

#### Update on State Level Benchmarks and Process to Determine Regional Benchmarks for School Readiness Indicators (Presentation and Discussion)

Karen Woodhouse, Chief Program Officer, First Things First gave a brief overview of the 10 Benchmark Indicators approved by First Things First Board in October. Ms. Woodhouse informed the committee that included in their packet were the narratives and data resources examined and the trend lines for each indicator presented to the board. Ms. Woodhouse informed the committee that process was started approximately three years ago, convening a group of stakeholders and community partners to compile the information and begin this process which was presented to the board, process and progress will be measured along the way. Three committees were convened to comprise and collect this information; Early Learning, Health and Family, Friend and Neighbor, with sub-committees doing additional work.

Ms. Woodhouse briefly reviewed the three categories, some with complete data, baseline data and those where data collection was still a factor but working to accomplish this effort. Ms. Woodhouse also indicated that this information and documents are available on the First Things First website for anyone that is interested in reading the complete report and documents.

After the presentation, Ms. Woodhouse stated that First Things First funds these strategies along with partners and other funding available. Ms. Woodhouse welcomed questions from the committee members regarding her presentation.

Cheryl Foster, Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children asked a question regarding; healthy weight using WICC data, is there also intent to use data from pediatricians? Ms. Woodhouse replied that this is a targeted population, she indicated that the sub-committee was not able to find a repository for this information. At this time there may be an opportunity in the future to have access to aggregated data, so committee determined that the WICC data was the best source to use.

Ms. Foster also asked if indicator #6 Children exiting special education to kindergarten regular education; situations where this happens at the exit of kindergarten opposed to the beginning of kindergarten? Is there any possibility that this will change?

Ms. Woodhouse replied that this was being reviewed, Arizona Department of Education staff that is directly involved with this work asked to take part in the review of data. Discussion regarding school district evaluation at the end of kindergarten year moving into first grade. Determination was that this is still a good measure to track and we will continue monitoring to ensure the intent of the measure.

Kymberlii Tenario, Tohono O'odham Tribal Head Start Program stated that on the reservation children with special needs leaving Head Start, enter a two week transition period. Special Needs staff from school district very involved in the transition.

#### **FTF Research and Evaluation Plan**

Dr. Amy Kemp, Sr. Director for Evaluation gave an update on the Evaluation Plan recommendation by the National Panel convened by the First Things First Board. This panel was commissioned to review the evaluation efforts to ensure that First Things First is measuring the answers and matching the overall structure of First Things First.

Goals of First Things First are similar to the recommendation of the panel. Recommendation of the panel was that the infrastructure of Evaluation and Research was an important part needed to be built. Eight infrastructure goals were recommended, to support the studies.

Infrastructure goals:

Focus on program implementation

Identify services children receive

Services children need

How much services did children receive

What are the quality of services

Data system is useful source, Mapping is good for community decision making. Working on data system, not just to house data but too provide tools run with the data system. Purpose of the data system is to ensure data used meaningfully, data meets needs of Regional Partnership Council and gain insights from communities to ensure children are receiving services. Also, to work with Tribes in the State of Arizona to ensure that data collaboration is in place.

Child Care Demand Study, one time study, families identify decision making priority use; what type of care they use for their child.. How is this used in conjunction with care and is there unmet demand and what that unmet demand is. This will be presented to the Board at the December meeting.

Compensation and Credentials study; calls center director to report on the credentials on teacher at center. Modify in future to receive more information on individual teachers, to include general level of education and backgrounds for Professional Development.

Quality First study large; need to understand implementation of Quality First, what is intensity of coaching providers receiving, intensity of early education services children receiving, what is relationship between services and Star Rating, what it takes to move providers up in Stars.

The National Panel heard that First Things First wants more data, newer data and better data focusing on young children in Arizona.

Dr. Kemp asked if there were questions regarding her presentation, and Susan Jacobs, Association for Supportive Child Care asked if there was a way to service families at a lower cost? There are many families and child care providers struggling; to pay for the cost of child care and providers struggling to keep doors open. Dr. Kemp, stated that evaluation may be seen as a multiplier, if focus on evaluation and make better program decision, it can multiply the services provided.

#### **Early Learning Strategy Updates**

Ginger Sandweg, Director of Quality First, provided updates on the Quality First program, Star Rating program and the Quality First Scholarship program. Currently there are 41,000 children enrolled in Quality First programs, 36% are infant and toddlers. 273 programs currently on the wait-list.

Ms. Sandweg explained the selection process stating that about 40 programs are selected every five weeks, with selection just occurring. Data provided in materials not current due to materials needed for the Board Books with plenty of time for preparation. Scholarships are aligned with Quality First participation, all QF programs now receive certain amount of scholarship based on size and Star Rating. Currently number of scholarships awarded 5,127, filled at this time 3,989. Discrepancies due to programs waiting to be selected into Quality First and programs that were not in Quality First needing parents to fill out paperwork for scholarships, this was a new process for many programs. Centers reapply for Quality First on an annual basis so that information is accurate and current.

The majority of programs fall in the 2 star range. Current data is trending in a positive direction as there are more 3 – 5 star programs than 1 star programs. The number of programs in the 1 and 2 star range are decreasing while the number of 3 – 5 star programs continues to increase.

Dr. Kelley asked Ms. Sandweg what the top Stars were doing to get to that point and if there were models on how to move up? Ms. Sandweg replied some programs that moved up incredibly fast. Ms. Woodhouse indicated rating process has just begun, evaluation is definitely looking at this process and tracking.

Karen Woodford, inquired do all programs want to be Five Star and if so what is the follow up? Ms. Sandweg informed the committee that the coaching model is of high intensity at the one and 2 star programs. Coaches provide low intensity support to the Three - Five Star programs to help reach the highest possible star.

Dr. Kelley informed the committee that this agenda item would continue to be re-visited in future meetings.

#### **Reports on Sub-Committee Activities**

Cami Ehler, Program Specialist, provided the committee with brief overview of the Family, Friend and Neighbor Sub-Committee work. The FFN sub-committee developed a definition of FFN and explored where are they in the system? What do we mean, who are they, what are the characteristics? A copy of the Standard of Practice was included in the packet for committee members. Next steps for the committee will be considering how to measure quality in Family, Friend and Neighbor settings. Kith and Kin Project and Indigo Cultural Center representative presented some very informative information to the committee to help better understand and make good choices when compiling the SOP. Other groups looking at FFN are Helios. Close to Home Group and the Arizona Alliance for Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care.

Dr. Ida Rose Florez, Sr. Director of Strategic Initiatives spoke on the work of the Professional Development Workgroup, Dr. Florez provided a DRAFT copy of the plan in development. She indicated that three sub-groups developed; Degrees and Credentials, Workforce Knowledge and Competency, and Registry and Website Subgroups. Subgroups questioned; is this a Birth to Five age system or Birth to Eight system? This group has become a BUILD Working Group, FTF will manage meetings, BUILD will provide consultant services, resources and facilitates for organizations throughout the country.

Dr. Florez gave a quick overview of the work plans, plans are still in development and each group is working toward two outcomes for each group. Workgroup One – Progression of Degree and Assess other state to learn about prior learning assessments. Workgroup Two – Revision of Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, one project, two phases. Workgroup Three – Website and Registry. System build website and develop registry connecting First Things First to database.

#### **Systems Approach Framework and Development of FY 2012 Work Plan**

Ms. Woodhouse, indicated that this item also will be discussed in future meetings. A quick review was given that this is a possible tool to be used for discussion; What's next? Identify type of work First Things First requested related to benchmarks and indicators.


#### **Discussion and Possible Approval of Additional Early Learning Advisory Committee Focus Areas for the Coming Year**

Dr. Kelley stated that this agenda item would move to the top of the agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

#### **Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m. Member Jacobs motioned that the meeting be adjourned. Member Liggett seconded. Motion carried.

#### **SUBMITTED**



---

Elsa Romero, Executive Staff Assistant

#### **APPROVED**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Woodhouse, Chief Program Officer

Committee Approval:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Kelley, Co-Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Juan Sanchez, Co-Chair

DRAFT